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ABSTRACT

Shifts in child care policies are on the horizon. Congress has passed landmark changes in federal welfare programs that will have a major impact on the demand for child care and require states to re-examine many of their current child care policies. This paper by the Children's Defense Fund is intended to help child care advocates understand the many difficult issues that may be raised if states propose to revamp current child care systems as a result of federal welfare reform. The document contains the following sections: (1) Key Choices Your State May Have to Face; (2) Are There Strategies to Avoid Harmful Changes in Child Care?; (3) Will Your State Maintain State Investments in Child Care?; (4) Who Should Be Eligible for Child Care Assistance in Your State?; (5) Should Your State Restructure Its Sliding Fee Scale?; (6) What Payment Approaches Should Your State Use?; (7) Should Your State Change Its Reimbursement Rates?; (8) Will Your State Encourage the Use of Informal Child Care?; (9) What Can Your State Do to Improve Quality and Expand the Supply of Child Care?; and (10) Will States Require Low-Income Mothers to Become Family Child Care Providers? An appendix summarizes key child care provisions of the 1996 Governors' Plan. Contains 28 references. (WJC)

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